

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 17 remain in the application. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Byrnes et al., and claims 4-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) where Byrnes et al. is used as the primary reference.

According to Byrnes, a damper has a central shaft, an outer housing and an elastomer member disposed therebetween. The central shaft, the outer housing and the elastomer member respectively correspond to the internal armature, the external armature and the device of the instant invention.

The elastomer member can optionally include one or more shims between plys. The embodiment closest to the invention leads to design this member as two plys separated by one shim.

In this case, the first ply, the shim and the second ply could eventually be assimilated to the internal sleeve, the intermediate ring and the external sleeve of the present application. The damper of Byrnes includes neither an internal ring nor an external ring located between the elastomer member and respectively the shaft and the external housing.

The internal and external rings are set forth as structural limitations in claims 1 and 15 and their functions are explained in the description page 9, lines 5-26.

The external ring is provided for preloading the external sleeve and the internal ring is provided for preloading the internal sleeve. It is very clear that Byrnes et al cannot preload the internal sleeve since this sleeve is bonded to a solid shaft.

Dealing with claims 15 and 17, the adapter of De Antonio et al does not include an internal ring between the elastomer ring 2 and the inner armature 1. De Antonio provides for

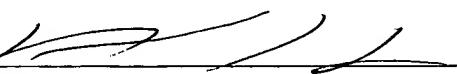
eliminating residual stresses in the elastomer ring once the adapter is assembled (column 2, lines 30-37). He teaches to reduce the diameter of the outer sheath rather than to reduce the diameter of the ring (column 2, lines 46-48). He does not provide for an internal ring and accordingly, cannot suggest to shrink such a ring.

In view of the above, it is believed that claim 1, together with dependent claims 2-14 and 17, and claim 15 are in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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2-10-04
Date

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